

Talking Points

Interview with Site Selection magazine

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Since this magazine is site-selector specific, we need to work in the message that Mississippi's approach to working with site selection professionals is to ensure that the outcome will be a win for the client, the site selector and the state.

Here are a few messages in response to commonly asked questions that we are trying to promote in national-level interviews:

When asked about recent accomplishments:

- Point to the growth in our automotive sector with Toyota and its associated suppliers (see attached updated matrix of suppliers.) Also, Nissan's additional \$118 million investment to its plant in Canton to produce their newly-debuted commercial vehicle.

- Talk about growth in the aviation/aerospace sectors and point to partnerships with universities for R&D which helps to build capacity in these sectors.

For example, GE Aviation (\$90 million investment) and its partnerships with MSU's Raspet Flight Center for R&D on the composite fan platforms for their jet engines. Southern Miss' Polymer Center is also involved in this and at some point Ole Miss' Center for Manufacturing Excellence will also be involved. These types of university partnerships with business are common in Mississippi.

Other industries such as steel fabrication continue to grow with the recent siting of Steel Development Corp. in Amory, MS - \$175 million investment; 100 jobs at salaries of \$50K+.

When asked about the economy and its impact on the state's existing industry:

- Point out that while Mississippi is not immune to the downturn in the economy, we are also experiencing a steady stream of expansions. (See list of expansions over the past year.) The state has always had a dual focus of actively recruiting new business and supporting existing business.

When asked about opportunities for the state:

- Focus on the state's energy opportunities under the overall mission of making Mississippi a reliable energy-producing state. We usually quote about \$20 billion as the value of energy projects that are under way or planned.